

home guarantee my completing tasks on a timely basis. Finding ways to do two things at once is a game I play: riding the exercise bike while watching the news on television, reading a paperback novel while waiting in the bank line, restaurant breakfast meetings for business or pleasure. Years ago I discovered mail-order shopping.

It took no time at all to relegate housework to where it belongs on my priority list—off the list. I have made the bed twice in the past decade. Ironing is a word not in my vocabulary. I once made a promise to my spouse that I would cook for him, and I do this faithfully—every Sunday evening. My intense need for privacy keeps me from hiring household help, so I clean the house myself, as infrequently as possible. I have accumulated an arsenal of space-age cleaning tools. Not only am I a speed-reader, I am also a speed-cleaner. My spouse and I divide the absolutely necessary household duties according to who detests doing what less. He does the laundry, vacuums, changes the unmade bed, and attempts household repairs. I feed the cat, water the houseplants, empty the wastebaskets, take out the garbage, wash the dishes every Sunday evening, and mow the lawn. (Actually, I only mow the front lawn, primarily to appease the neighbors; the backyard, spared from the neighborhood view, is our minijungle.) Grocery shopping is done together, our Sunday social event.

Ten years ago I redirected my career because private practice was making me dull. I actually work more hours in academic medicine, but I have more control of those hours. Instead of being on call 24 hours a day every day, I now take call only one week out of seven. I am running my career instead of having it run me.

I rejected the Superwoman Syndrome as soon as I learned of its existence. I never wanted to be Superwoman. It is hard enough just being. My goal is to become Ordinary Woman, at which point my life will function ideally. I do not have to have it all. I do not even want it all. I have learned to say no. I have graciously accepted my deficiencies and failures. I actively strive to become downwardly mobile, and I very much enjoy my “dinky” (double income, no kids) status.

NADINE C. BRUCE, MD
Department of Medicine
University of Hawaii John A. Burns
School of Medicine
Honolulu
Governor-Elect
American College of Physicians
Hawaii

The Successful Mix

EDITOR'S NOTE: Peggy Fritzsche, MD, is a Professor of Radiology at Loma Linda (California) University Medical Center. She is active in local and national medical organizations and is past president of the medical staff at her hospital. She is married to Anton N. Hasso, MD, a neuroradiologist; they have two grown sons.

THERE ARE SEVERAL FACTORS that have allowed me to successfully mix my personal and professional lives. I have benefited by the inspiration of my mother, who urged excellence in schoolwork and household tasks. She encouraged her children to excel: “No one can ever take education and achievements away from you.” This early influence directed many of my decisions, even during childhood, and I learned to eliminate activities that were not goal-oriented. Self-discipline and productivity were expected, and they followed naturally.

The inspiration of my teachers and professors encouraged me to pursue a medical career. This was especially

important when peers suggested less demanding alternatives. The inspiration of my spouse has always supported my efforts to teach locally and nationally, learn new skills, write, and participate in administrative and committee work. His response to my professional invitations is always the same: “You accepted, didn’t you?”

Being a skilled observer of other people, procedures, events, and conversation offers a distinct advantage. There also is value in seeking new information. I gather the facts and incorporate with dedicated discipline anything of importance that will improve my personal life or professional activities. The new ideas may relate to improved lecture presentations, procedure techniques, writing skills or proficiency, or committee work. I evaluate committee commitments and identify the needs of the group. I then volunteer according to my talents or interest in learning new information. I make it customary never to turn down an opportunity to serve, meet new people, or experience new things, even when it is inconvenient to previous plans or my personal life.

There is a positive aspect to every event, so I do not waste time on regrets—that is only negative reinforcement. I practice reliving the vibrant and exciting times, and I smile for myself.

Personal improvement also is enhanced through changing behavior relating to health, exercise, and nutrition. Discipline and mental strength are helpful traits. Flexibility is necessary to meet new challenges, and it may require conscious compromise in the area of mundane household tasks. I make my time and efforts meaningful based on what activity will have importance five or ten years in the future.

The mind must be in touch with the body daily. If there is a deficiency in sleep, fresh air, movement, or diet, then I make adjustments to my schedule as soon as possible. It is important to pace myself and avoid stress. I use relaxation techniques that can be practiced anywhere: office, car, plane, amphitheater. Many times events must be rescheduled or cancelled in order to observe mind and body alignment. My body needs daily aerobic exercise, and I frequently use vacation time for physical activity.

I am a pilot, and I love to practice loops, rolls, and spins on the weekend in my Bellanca Super Decathlon aerobatic airplane.

Close monitoring of my activities by my spouse and me prevents overload. Our regular sharing of activities and discussions helps to identify priorities. The advantage of two viewpoints on one topic provides an additional valuable perspective. My understanding helpmate participates in managing the children and household—the secret to my happiness and success.

PEGGY J. FRITZSCHE, MD
Department of Radiology
Loma Linda University Medical Center
Loma Linda, California

The Juggled Life

EDITOR'S NOTE: Leona M. Bayer, MD, practiced medicine in the San Francisco area for 50 years. She was also on the clinical staff of Stanford University School of Medicine. On the occasion of her 85th birthday, she was honored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and on two previous occasions by the Physicians for Social Responsibility.

DICTIONARIES DEFINE JUGGLING IN MANY WAYS, most of them implying trickery or deceit. Perhaps those of us who try to